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between the warlike Gé-speaking Suyá and the peaceful but overbearing Kamayurá, they were an easy prey to these tribes and to others more peripheral to the region, such as the Caiabí and Kayapó. The tribes the Trumaí feared most were those to the north. These included the Suyá, Yuruna, and an unidentified group. The Yuruna, located by Galvão on the Diauarum River, north of the Suyá, were said to have made raids on the headwater villages,[13] but nothing is known of any aggression by the unnamed tribe. There is definite documentation of numerous assaults by the Suyá, whose reputation for ferocity is unequalled in the area.

The Suyá villages are located several days journey to the north on the Suyá Missú River, and forays into the Kuluene-Kuliseu region have become relatively rare since the establishment of local airfields. Quain was of the opinion that the last Suyá raid on the Trumaí took place about twenty years ago when the brother of the Trumaí chief was killed. Two of Quain's informants had been captured by the Suyá as pre-pubescent boys. Suyá raids into the tributaries resulted in great destruction and von den Steinen reported a Trumaí village to have been recently burned and looted by them.[14]

The upper Xingú peoples were not always passive towards the Suyá. A revenge attack was once launched by the combined forces of the Kamayurá, Mehinaku, Waurá, and Trumaí. Their flotilla of twenty canoes assaulted and burned a Suyá village, starting another cycle of attacks and counter-attacks. This is the only known case of an inter-tribal alliance in war, but there have probably been others.

When Quain was with the Trumaí the memory of past attacks was still strong, and the mere mention of the Suyá was sufficient to cause great anxiety. Indicative of their feeling toward the Suyá is the Trumaí creation myth according to which the Sun made all tribes except the Suyá who are descended from snakes.

Among the Kuliseu tribes, the Kamayurá and Nahukwa were the two most feared. The former, especially, by small acts of aggression against the weakened Trumaí, had done great harm. As a result of the widespread hostility and distrust, Trumaí life was pervaded with insecurity. Tension always increased at night, and the slightest sound from the brush was enough to cause panic. Rumors of an impending attack were often brought to the village by visitors from other groups. These were generally false stories intended to frighten the Trumaí, but, reflecting the prevailing anxiety, they were always accepted as true.

The Kamayurá were the chief instigators of these tales. One visitor from the latter group told the Trumaí that the Kamayurá were coming to kill all of them as soon as Quain left. The Kamayurá attempted to

[13] Galvão 1952, p. 469.
[14] Von den Steinen 1897, p. 115.

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*Deities and Mythology*

The Trumaí were certainly not preoccupied with the supernatural. Quain makes no mention of the spirit owners of animal, plant, and fish species that figure so prominently in the Kamayurá belief system, nor does he speak of the "*ole* spirits" attributed to the Trumaí by Oberg.[8] Beliefs, which are a more covert part of culture, are particularly difficult for an ethnographer who lacks familiarity with the language to learn about, and it is understandable that Quain's notes are weak on this point.

Magic, except for sorcery, was not observed by Quain, unless shamanistic curing is considered a magical practice. No objects, such as charms or amulets, were thought to have a magical effect, and the already discarded ceremonial objects were the only inanimate items that could be said to have some inherent religious value. In short, the day-to-day world of the Trumaí was little influenced by extra-corporeal forces or personages. The deities were nearly all culture heroes and creators, who did their work in the dim past of the "grandfathers of all the Trumaí."

With some variation the mythology of the Trumaí was quite similar to that of the Kamayurá. The most important of the Trumaí creation deities was Sun (Atehle). This was not the visible, celestial sun. The Trumaí explained that the celestial sun was only the *aton* (pet) of the real Sun, who was important in all the creation myths. Sun no longer actively intervened in life, but in the days of the creation he was an anthropomorphic personage having great supernatural powers. Sun's mother was the wife of Panther (Fetde), who appears in the tales of the after life. This woman, in turn, was the daughter of Wamutsini, or Grandfather. The latter had an important part in the creation, for he was the original deity from whom the other supernaturals sprang. Wamutsini's daughter was not important in these stories.

The identity and character of Moon were ill-defined. At one time Moon was in the heavens with Sun, who, however, became angry with him and cast him out to his present isolated position. Moon was once eaten by Awalanaxe, a fish. Sun, upon learning of this, made a fishhook, caught Awalanaxe, and disembowelled him. Moon was found inside quite chewed up, but Sun molded him back into shape. A fly then crawled up the nostril of the unconscious Moon causing him to sneeze. He thought that he had merely been asleep, but Sun explained that he had been eaten.

Moon's sex was highly ambivalent, being a male in some tales and a female in others. He was not, however, important as a creator. Awalanaxe appeared frequently in the mythology as did Wakpanehene, another fish.

[8] Oberg 1953, p. 84.

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Crow appeared as a trickster and, although not a creator deity, managed to bring forth new things in the process of his machinations. Waniwani, the name of an abandoned Trumaí village site, was also a village in the heavens — the home of a mythical person of the same name. Jemenary, Kelenewary, and Nane were three other mythological characters. The second was the sister's son (*deta*) of the first, and an inveterate trickster. Although they appear in a Trumaí tale of mythological times, they had no part in the creative process.

Rain (Ka'wixu) was apparently the only Trumaí deity capable of interfering with the world in its present form. Although he appeared as a character in the mythology, he was also believed to be the active agent behind rains and storms. The Trumaí were extremely frightened of thunder and lightning, and thought storms to be the result of someone's having antagonized Rain. During a violent equinoctial thunder storm, Aloari came rushing into Quain's house, imploring him to turn out his light and stop working as he was angering Rain. Despite their fear of displeasing Rain, the Trumaí on a few occasions tried to drive away the clouds. One man blew at the clouds to push them back, while Quain was told to fire his rifle to frighten Rain away.

There was also a class of malignant beings that were important as omens. The Trumaí could not look at a snake called *lesilesi*, seemingly the rattlesnake. Aloari said that shortly after he saw one, two of his brothers died. Jakwalu saw one while she was harvesting manioc in the garden, and it was generally believed that for this reason she would not live long. Quain was uncertain whether this was the immediate result of seeing the snake, or whether the snake was an omen that the Kamayurá were practicing witchcraft on her. Similarly, anyone seeing the *le*, a bird with a red forehead, would die. And finally there were sirens inhabiting the woods to the northeast of the Trumaí village. Their call exerted an attraction, and anyone seeing them or cohabiting with them would surely die. These women had long hair, wore bark cloth pubic coverings, and did not depilate. Significantly, the direction of their abode and their appearance correspond to those of Suyá women. Omens, such as cloud formations and canine howls, indicate the imminence of an enemy attack.

### *The Origin of Things*

Most of the Trumaí mythology is devoted to explaining the origin of the natural world, people, and culture. The chief creator deities are Sun and Wamutsini.

In the beginning there was only Wamutsini. His origin is not explained, and he is probably thought to have always existed. He made daughters out of wood. One of them married Panther, who lived in the

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793 Milky Way, and gave birth to Sun and Moon; but whether Panther begot them is not known. No myth was found for the creation of the Earth, but the river waters were the result of a dispute between Sun and Wamutsini. In the region of the abandoned village of Morena there was a semicircular bay in which Wamutsini decided to take a bath.[9] He did not tell Sun of this place, as he was angry with him, and Sun, apparently in retaliation, told Crow to bring water, from which the rivers were formed. In other versions Moon and the *kate* fish also appear.

The region near Morena is important in the Trumaí myth cycle. In this section Waniwani stole Sun's wife and took her to his village. A sparse place in the brush nearby served Sun as a path to his bathing place. His house was also in the brush nearby, but no one had ever seen it, for fear of angering him.

Sun was responsible for many other features of the natural order. Sun shot the otter in the posterior, thus forming his anus; before this the otter could eliminate only through his mouth. He also made certain that man would get his work done by creating the gnat (*pejot*) which prevented the people from sleeping during the day. That man had to be so goaded into earning his subsistence is an interesting commentary on the economic ethic of the Trumaí.

Quain also recorded a number of stories of how human beings were created. In one, Awalanaxe Kute was the first human, but he swam in the water and was much like a fish. Wamutsini, who was dissatisfied with his form, baited a fishhook with a cigarette, caught him, and molded him into his present beautiful shape, as one Trumaí man explained while stroking his own body narcissistically. In another, the Sun made all people; and in still another the Sun made all good people out of arrows. (The Suyá were the offspring of a snake.) The Sun then distributed the land among the Kuluene-Kuliseu tribes, but the Suyá, who were left out, fled to their present home. The Bakairí and the white men were also made by the Sun. The Trumaí found it hard to understand why Quain did not observe rules of affinal avoidance, for "did not the Sun make the white men, too?"

There is also a myth in which Moon's wife is a Trumaí woman who was seduced by Sun. Trumaí children were born of this mating.

Sun also gave cultures to those whom he created. Long ago, Sun laid a bow, a pot, some beeswax, and a steel axe on the ground and told the Trumaí, Waurá, Kamayurá, and the white men to choose from among them. The Trumaí chose the beeswax, which made Sun angry with them. The Kamayurá chose the bow, and the Waurá, the pot. The white men

[9] Morena, the locale where Warputsini is said by the Trumaí to have created humanity, is, according to Oberg (1953, p. 49), claimed by the Kamayurá to have been the village where their Mávutsiné, the equivalent of the Trumaí Wamutsini, created the Kamayurá.

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took the axe, and this is why they have been able to build a great civilization. Indeed, white men, although first encountered in 1884, figure in many Trumaí myths. For instance, Waniwani once seduced Uluwa's wife and took her to the land of the white men, which was thought to lie either downstream near the Yuruna or beyond the headwaters of the Kuluene River.

Many ceremonies were first taught by Sun. He presented Maibu's deceased brother with a spear-thrower and taught him the spear-throwing contest. He also first made the masks which the Trumaí once used. The people of the area received cotton and tobacco from Sun, and he gave the fishtrap to the Mehinaku.

The foregoing creation myths collected by Quain were probably only a small part of the Trumaí cycle. Paradoxically, the historic legend of their migration into the area and the subsequent borrowing of culture elements from their neighbors would seem to negate the creation myths in which the Trumaí appear to have always lived in the upper Xingú area. Quain states that they have reconciled the inconsistencies, but he does not support this point with any concrete data. Undoubtedly this problem bothered the ethnographer far more than the Trumaí.

### *The After-Life*

Waniwani, the village of the afterworld, was located in the heavens. In order to get there one had to travel the Milky Way. This was the abode of Panther, and the road was lined with many panthers who inflicted dangerous wounds on the wayfarers. After passing through this gamut, the dead entered the Trumaí village. Here many Trumaí resided, and the rivers and lagoons teemed with *kate* fish. These were usually caught by poisoning, as the *tawasi* tree grew in abundance. There was no death in this afterworld; it was only on earth that death was feared, said the Trumaí.

### *Jemenary and Kelenewary*

The last of the Trumaí myths collected by Quain concerned Jemenary and his trickster nephew Kelenewary. This story, which has a decided Oedipus theme with the maternal uncle in the father role, was the only context in which these two appeared, and they cannot be identified further than to say that they were mythological beings who lived in the "long ago" of the Trumaí.

Jemenary was angry with Kelenewary because the latter, his *deta*, or sister's son, was sleeping with his wife. Kelenewary knew no shame, for a good Trumaí would never have done such a thing. Jemenary tried by a series of ruses to rid himself of his nephew. He ordered him to

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773 gather some vegetable dye in a tree in which he had put a snake. The wily nephew made designs on his leg with the dye which caused the snake to fall out of the tree. He returned home and resumed his relations with his uncle's wife.

Jemenary then ordered Kelenewary to cross a river in which there was a fish that would surely eat him. The nephew suffered some bites, but these he cured by smearing with another vegetable dye. The infuriated uncle then sent him to the village of Rain, Kelenewary's cross-cousin, to get a highly prized wood which Rain guarded closely. Kelenewary arrived at Rain's village and repeatedly urged Rain to have sexual intercourse with his wife. After many wakeful nights, the couple, exhausted, fell into deep sleep. Kelenewary stole the wood, and returned to his uncle's house, where he continued to sleep with his uncle's wife.

Later, when the two men were building an eagle cage, Kelenewary, who was sitting on top of it, angered his uncle by saying that the eagle was no larger than one of his wife's pubic hairs. The enraged Jemenary released the vertical poles in the framework of the structure, catapulting the insolent nephew through the air and into the branches of a tree. Kelenewary was hurt, and Nane, a creature having a human form but capable of flying, carried him to his village. Under Nane's care, he drank medicines that restored him to health and caused him to grow to a tremendous size. The uncle, in despair, created the deer with the intention of having it kill his nephew. Kelenewary, however, lassoed the animal with his armband, and it killed the uncle instead. The opposition thus removed, the nephew returned to the embraces of his dead uncle's wife.

### *Lore and Learning*

821 [775] The cosmology of the Trumaí was not very elaborate. Many stars and constellations were known and named. As noted above, the Milky Way entered into their beliefs of an after-life. Special attention was also given to the Hesperides, which may be the constellation that dates their ceremonial season at the end of the rains. Quain was told by Thomas Young, the missionary, that the planting time was determined by astral phenomena. Quain was not able to confirm this, but he noted that the Trumaí knew the proper time for burning the felled brush. This knowledge was important as the rains arrive suddenly, and once the brush becomes wet it is almost impossible to fire.

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805 824 825 Flora and fauna also served as markers of seasonal passage. One such sign was an insect that issued a shrill and pleasant whistle from dusk until far into the night in the weeks immediately preceding the rainy season.